

# **Regional Panel Recommendations to the ANSTF**

To be presented at ANSTF meeting in Erie, PA

8 May 2007

## **Mid-Atlantic Regional Panel**

### **Database Development**

The Mid-Atlantic Panel of the ANSTF recommends the Task Force continue to strongly encourage federal participation in the development of a comprehensive aquatic invasive species database that would ultimately allow reliable searches for aquatic invasive species temporal and spatial data in the United States. The Non-Indigenous Aquatic Species Database Working Group (NIASDWG) is working towards development, dialog and coordination among a number of databases. However, more support is needed if we are to achieve a comprehensive database that makes a meaningful contribution to preventing, controlling and managing aquatic invasive species.

## **Western Regional Panel**

### **Viral Hemorrhagic Septicemia Virus**

A new, highly virulent and easily transmissible strain (IVb) of viral hemorrhagic septicemia virus (VHSV) has recently been detected in wild fish populations within the Great Lakes Basin. Unlike other strains of VHSV, epizootics due to this virus have been documented in a broad diversity of freshwater fish families and species. This new strain of VHSV poses a significant risk to cultured and wild fish within the Western Regional Panel area and throughout most of North America. The primary vector for transmitting the virus into the region is suspected to be the movement of live fish and fish products. Many states within the Western Regional Panel are evaluating fish transport and bait laws to help reduce the risk from that vector. States have also increased public outreach activities to increase public awareness of the issue. As a fish pathogen VHSV is not readily viewed as an Aquatic Nuisance Species by all agencies or states, additionally many states with well developed fish health programs do not involve their ANS programs or coordinators when evaluating the risks or control/prevention strategies for this pathogen. The Western Regional Panel encourages all member states to become familiar with this emerging pathogen and to incorporate it into their ANS programs. We request that the ANSTF recognize this pathogen as an ANS and as a severe threat to the natural resources of North America.

## **Special Permit Provisions**

It is well documented that the movement of equipment between waterbodies is a significant vector spreading zebra mussels and other ANS. Federal, state, and regional entities and their contractors frequently move equipment between water bodies as part of their associated activities. Without the implementation of proper decontamination protocols prior to equipment movement, ANS can be unknowingly and illegally transferred from infested waters to uninfested areas. The Western Regional Panel recommends that the ANSTF recognize this as a significant vector for the spread of ANS and encourage member agencies to require decontamination of all equipment prior to movement. This can be accomplished through HACCP planning as well as special permit provisions for contractors. The Western Regional Panel (in partnership with other regional panels) can draft decontamination procedures that ANSTF members can use in agency contracts.

## **Mississippi River Basin Regional Panel**

1. The Aquatic Nuisance Species Task Force (ANSTF) should adopt a statement endorsing federal support for controlling common carp *Cyprinus carpio*.

The common carp is one of the first and most damaging invasive fish in North American inland waters, especially in inland shallow lakes, rivers, and wetlands. Although this species is well-established, there are strategies for controlling its abundance in closed bodies of inland waters using integrated pest management procedures. Problems and solutions to common carp may vary greatly between geographic regions and ecosystem types; therefore, control strategies will need to be adaptive and developed on a regional basis. A national control plan is not practical; however, national support is needed to develop the solid understanding of this species' life history that will be required for effective control strategies. Federal and state agencies and private organizations will need to be involved in controlling common carp. These efforts to control common carp could eventually serve as a test case for controlling other fish species.

2. The Chairpersons of the ANSTF should designate a Department of Defense representative with control over military bases as a member of the ANSTF.

Section 1201b of the Nonindigenous Aquatic Nuisance Prevention and Control Act of 1990 lists membership of the ANSTF and states that the head of other federal agencies may be designated as members by the Chairpersons. The Department of Defense is represented on the ANSTF by members from the United States Corps of Engineers. Even though this agency influences large segments of the Department of Defense, a member representing the broad range of military bases would increase coordination with the ANSTF. Many military bases have waterbodies that provide recreational opportunities for base personnel and their families. As base personnel move around the country, these waterbodies are susceptible to infestation by ANS. Military bases are also required to have Integrated Natural Resources Management Plans, and efforts to prevent and control ANS should be integrated into these Plans.